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California State Senate

SENATOR
NOREEN EVANS
SECOND SENATE DISTRICT

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SUITE 120A
SANTA ROSA, CA 95404
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710 E STREET
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EUREKA, CA 95501
(707) 445-6508
200 SOUTH SCHOOL STREET
UKIAH, CA 95482
(707) 468-8914
1040 MAIN STREET
SUITE 205
NAPA, CA 94559
(707) 224-1990
444 GEORGIA STREET
VALLEJO, CA 94590
(707) 648-5312

July 5, 2011

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Letter of Support for Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project

Dear Chairman Bosco:

I write in support of Sotoyome Resource Conservation District (SRCD) and their request for funding from the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project, Phase 1. SRCD believes this project to be crucial in the recovery of endangered Salmonid species in what is proving to be one of the last refuges of anadromous fish habitat in the Russian River watershed.

While far from pristine, the Austin Creek watershed has fewer threats to Coho habitat than any tributary to the Russian River and is one of the largest contributors to the river's overall Coho population. In 2008, the Coastal Conservancy granted SRCD funding to assess 55 miles of rural unsurfaced roads within the watershed in order to determine point sources of erosion that could potentially deliver sediment to the Austin Creek system. A significant portion of this project was to create a restoration plan to improve the drainage designs of these road networks in order to minimize future impacts on the local hydrology. In early 2010, the erosion assessment was completed and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Division of Water Resources (DWR) funded drainage improvements on roughly 11 miles roadway. It is my understanding that total implementation of the drainage treatments will prevent an estimated 13,150 yd^3 of sediment from being deposited in Austin Creek. In order to complete this project as designed, additional funding is necessary.

The CDFG Russian River Basin Fisheries Restoration Plan cites gravel quality as the highest priority limiting factor in Austin Creek, and ranks erosion control as the highest priority habitat recommendation. This project specifically addresses this high priority through an implementation plan that's main priority is to facilitate salmonid recovery by re-establishing the habitat conditions necessary for successful recolonization in the watershed. I strongly urge your support in providing funding for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation

Project, Phase 1, to ensure greater protection for endangered and threatened Salmonid species and for improved water quality. Please do not hesitate to contact my District Director, Ed Sheffield, at (707) 576-2771 with any questions you may have regarding my support for this proposal.

Sincerely,

Noreen Evans

NOREEN EVANS
Senator, 2nd District

Cc: Kara Heckert, Sotoyome RCD

California Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
Fisheries Restoration Bay Delta Region
7329 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA. 94558
http://www.dfg.ca.gov

***EDMUND G. BROWN**, Governor*
***John McCamman,** Director*

July 7, 2011

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Subject: Austin Creek Sediment Reduction Project Letter of Support

Dear Mr. Bosco

I am respectfully submitting this letter in support of the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District's (SRCD) request for funding to the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1. The SRCD believes this project to be crucial in the recovery of endangered salmonid species in what is proving to be one of the last, best refuges of anadromous fish habitat in the Russian River watershed. While far from pristine, the Austin Creek watershed has fewer threats to coho salmon habitat than many tributaries to the Russian River and is one of the largest contributors to the Russian's overall coho salmon population. For these reasons, in 2008, the State Coastal Conservancy granted SRCD funding to assess 55 miles of rural unpaved roads within the watershed in order to qualify and quantify point sources of erosion that are or have potential to deliver sediment to the Austin Creek system. A significant portion of this project was to create a restoration plan to improve the drainage designs of these road networks to prevent/minimize their future impact on the local hydrology.

In early 2010 this assessment was completed and grant proposals were submitted to the California Department of Fish and Game (Department) and Division of Water Resources (DWR) to implement road drainage improvements on over 11.74 miles of hydrologically connected road in the Austin Creek watershed. Each of these proposals was funded by the Department and DWR. Funding from the State Coastal Conservancy is also necessary to complete the project as designed. The implementation of the recommended drainage treatments will prevent an estimated 13,150 yd^3 of sediment from being deposited in Austin Creek and, consequently, the Russian River.

It is widely recognized that increased inputs of fine sediments into the coastal stream systems of northern California has detrimental effects on native salmonid populations. The Department's Russian River Basin Fisheries Restoration Plan cites gravel quality as the highest priority limiting factor in Austin Creek, and ranks erosion control as the highest priority habitat recommendation. This project will directly address these high priorities. This implementation project aims to facilitate salmonid recovery in conjunction

with the Coho Broodstock Program by re-establishing the habitat conditions necessary for the successful recolonization of coho salmon in the watershed.

With 92% of the watershed in private ownership, landowners and residents must be directly involved in restoration and improved stewardship efforts. The SRCD has a substantial track record in bringing together landowners for resource improvements on their properties and conducting these types of assessment and improvement projects on a landscape scale. I strongly urge your support in providing funding for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1, as an important project for endangered and threatened salmonid species and water quality.

Sincerely,

Dan Resnik
Associate Fisheries Biologist

Cc: Kara Heckert, Sotoyome RCD
Gail Seymour, Senior Environmental Scientist, DFG

COUNTY OF SONOMA

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

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EFREN CARRILLO
SUPERVISOR FIFTH DISTRICT

ecarrillo@sonoma-county.org

July 6, 2011

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

Dear Mr. Bosco:

I am respectfully submitting this letter in support of the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District's (SRCD) request for funding to the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1. The SRCD believes this project to be crucial in the recovery of endangered Salmonid species in what is proving to be one of the last, best refuges of anadromous fish habitat in the Russian River watershed. While far from pristine, the Austin Creek watershed has fewer threats to Coho habitat than any tributary to the Russian River and is one of the largest contributors to the Russian's overall Coho population. For these reasons, in 2008, the State Coastal Conservancy granted SRCD funding to assess 55 miles of rural unsurfaced roads within the watershed in order to qualify and quantify point sources of erosion that are or have potential to deliver sediment to Austin Creek system. A significant portion of this project was to create a restoration plan to improve the drainage designs of these road networks to prevent/minimize their future impact on the local hydrology.

In early 2010 this assessment was completed and grant proposals were submitted to California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) and Division of Water Resources (DWR) to implement road drainage improvements on over 11.74 miles of hydrologically connected road in the Austin Creek watershed. Each of these proposals was funded by CDFG and DWR but funding from the State Coastal Conservancy is necessary to complete the project as designed. The implementation of the recommended drainage treatments will prevent an estimated 13,150 yd^3 of sediment from being deposited in Austin Creek and, consequently, the Russian River.

It is widely recognized that increased inputs of fine sediments into the coastal stream systems of northern California has detrimental effects on native salmonid populations. The CDFG Russian River Basin Fisheries Restoration Plan cites gravel quality as the highest priority limiting factor in Austin Creek, and ranks erosion control as the highest priority habitat recommendation. This project will directly address these high priorities. This implementation project aims to facilitate salmonid recovery in conjunction with the Coho Broodstock Program by re-establishing the habitat conditions necessary for the successful recolonization of coho salmon in the watershed.

With 92% of the watershed in private ownership, landowners and residents must be directly involved in restoration and improved stewardship efforts. The SRCD has a substantial track record in bringing together landowners for resource improvements on their properties and conducting these types of assessment and improvement projects on a landscape scale. I strongly urge your support in providing funding for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1, as an important project for endangered and threatened Salmonid species and water quality.

Sincerely,

Efren Carrillo
Supervisor, Fifth District

Cc: Kara Heckert, Sotoyome RCD

SONOMA COUNTY WATER AGENCY

FILE:CF/45-0-1 GENERAL

June 28, 2011

Douglas Bosco, Chair
California State Coastal Conservancy
San Francisco Bay Area Conservancy Program
1330 Broadway, 13th Floor
Oakland, CA 94612

RE: Letter of Support for Funding the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1

Dear Mr. Bosco:

The Sonoma County Water Agency (Water Agency) supports the Sotoyome Resource Conservation District's (SRCD) request for funding to the California State Coastal Conservancy for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1. The Water Agency is under a federal mandate to improve conditions in the Russian River and Dry Creek for the benefit of endangered coho salmon and steelhead trout. Our work is only one piece of the puzzle. Tributary improvements – like the project SRCD is proposing for Austin Creek – are critical in recovery of these endangered salmonid species.

As one of the last, best refuges of anadromous fish habitat in the Russian River watershed, Austin Creek is a particularly important piece of this complex puzzle. While far from pristine, the Austin Creek watershed has fewer threats to coho habitat than any tributary to the Russian River and is one of the largest contributors to the river's overall coho population. Currently, juvenile fish from the Russian River Coho Recovery Broodstock Program (of which the Water Agency is a funding partner) are being released into Austin Creek. This proposed project aims to establish the habitat conditions necessary for the successful recolonization of these salmon.

The work being proposed in SRCD's Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1 will go a long way toward improving the overall health of this watershed by reducing sediment in the creek. It will also help reduce sediment in the river, potentially improving water quality.

For all these reasons, we strongly urge your support in providing funding for the Austin Creek Sediment Source Reduction Implementation Project Phase 1.

Sincerely,

Grant Davis
General Manager

c Kara Heckert, Sotoyome Resource Conservation District

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JUN 30 2011
COASTAL CONSERVANCY
OAKLAND, CALIF.

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404 Aviation Boulevard - Santa Rosa, CA 95403-9019 • (707) 526-5370 - Fax (707) 544-6123 - www.sonomacountywater.org/